

Area Committee guidelines may identify the disposal options available during an oil spill response and may describe what disposal requirements are mandatory or may not be waived by the OSC. ACP guidelines should address: the sampling, testing, and classifying of recovered oil and oiled debris; the segregation, temporary storage, and stockpiling of recovered oil and oiled debris; prior state disposal approvals and permits; and the routes; methods (e.g. recycle/reuse, on-site burning, incineration, landfilling, etc.); and sites for the disposal of collected oil, oiled debris, and animal carcasses; and procedures for obtaining waivers, exemptions, or authorizations associated with handling or transporting waste materials. The ACPs may identify a hierarchy of preferences for disposal alternatives, with recycling (reprocessing) being the most preferred, and other alternatives preferred based on priorities for health or the environment.

**§ 300.315 Phase IV—Documentation and cost recovery.**

(a) All OSLTF users need to collect and maintain documentation to support all actions taken under the CWA. In general, documentation shall be sufficient to support full cost recovery for resources utilized and shall identify the source and circumstances of the incident, the responsible party or parties, and impacts and potential impacts to public health and welfare and the environment. Documentation procedures are contained in 33 CFR part 136.

(b) When appropriate, documentation shall also be collected for scientific understanding of the environment and for research and development of improved response methods and technology. Funding for these actions is restricted by section 6002 of the OPA.

(c) OSCs shall submit OSC reports to the NRT or RRT, only if requested, as provided by § 300.165.

(d) OSCs shall ensure the necessary collection and safeguarding of information, samples, and reports. Samples and information shall be gathered expeditiously during the response to ensure an accurate record of the impacts incurred. Documentation materials shall be made available to the trustees

of affected natural resources. The OSC shall make available to trustees of the affected natural resources information and documentation in the OSC's possession that can assist the trustees in the determination of actual or potential natural resource injuries.

(e) Information and reports obtained by the EPA or USCG OSC shall be transmitted to the appropriate offices responsible for follow-up actions.

**§ 300.317 National response priorities.**

(a) Safety of human life must be given the top priority during every response action. This includes any search and rescue efforts in the general proximity of the discharge and the insurance of safety of response personnel.

(b) Stabilizing the situation to preclude the event from worsening is the next priority. All efforts must be focused on saving a vessel that has been involved in a grounding, collision, fire, or explosion, so that it does not compound the problem. Comparable measures should be taken to stabilize a situation involving a facility, pipeline, or other source of pollution. Stabilizing the situation includes securing the source of the spill and/or removing the remaining oil from the container (vessel, tank, or pipeline) to prevent additional oil spillage, to reduce the need for follow-up response action, and to minimize adverse impact to the environment.

(c) The response must use all necessary containment and removal tactics in a coordinated manner to ensure a timely, effective response that minimizes adverse impact to the environment.

(d) All parts of this national response strategy should be addressed concurrently, but safety and stabilization are the highest priorities. The OSC should not delay containment and removal decisions unnecessarily and should take actions to minimize adverse impact to the environment that begins as soon as a discharge occurs, as well as actions to minimize further adverse environmental impact from additional discharges.

(e) The priorities set forth in this section are broad in nature, and should

not be interpreted to preclude the consideration of other priorities that may arise on a site-specific basis.

**§ 300.320 General pattern of response.**

(a) When the OSC receives a report of a discharge, actions normally should be taken in the following sequence:

(1) Investigate the report to determine pertinent information such as the threat posed to public health or welfare of the United States or the environment, the type and quantity of polluting material, and the source of the discharge.

(2) Officially classify the size (i.e., minor, medium, major) and type (i.e., substantial threat to the public health or welfare of the United States, worst case discharge) of the discharge and determine the course of action to be followed to ensure effective and immediate removal, mitigation, or prevention of the discharge. Some discharges that are classified as a substantial threat to the public health or welfare of the United States may be further classified as a spill of national significance by the Administrator of EPA or the Commandant of the USCG. The appropriate course of action may be prescribed in §§ 300.322, 300.323, and 300.324.

(i) When the reported discharge is an actual or potential major discharge, the OSC shall immediately notify the RRT and the NRC.

(ii) When the investigation shows that an actual or potential medium discharge exists, the OSC shall recommend activation of the RRT, if appropriate.

(iii) When the investigation shows that an actual or potential minor discharge exists, the OSC shall monitor the situation to ensure that proper removal action is being taken.

(3) If the OSC determines that effective and immediate removal, mitigation, or prevention of a discharge can be achieved by private party efforts, and where the discharge does not pose a substantial threat to the public health or welfare of the United States, determine whether the responsible party or other person is properly carrying out removal. Removal is being done properly when:

(i) The responsible party is applying the resources called for in its response

plan to effectively and immediately remove, minimize, or mitigate threat(s) to public health and welfare and the environment; and

(ii) The removal efforts are in accordance with applicable regulations, including the NCP. Even if the OSC supplements responsible party resources with government resources, the spill response will not be considered improper, unless specifically determined by the OSC.

(4) Where appropriate, determine whether a state or political subdivision thereof has the capability to carry out any or all removal actions. If so, the OSC may arrange funding to support these actions.

(5) Ensure prompt notification of the trustees of affected natural resources in accordance with the applicable RCP and ACP.

(b) Removal shall be considered complete when so determined by the OSC in consultation with the Governor or Governors of the affected states. When the OSC considers removal complete, OSLTF removal funding shall end. This determination shall not preclude additional removal actions under applicable state law.\*COM008\*

**§ 300.322 Response to substantial threats to public health or welfare of the United States.**

(a) As part of the investigation described in § 300.320, the OSC shall determine whether a discharge results in a substantial threat to public health or welfare of the United States (including, but not limited to, fish, shellfish, wildlife, other natural resources, and the public and private beaches and shorelines of the United States). Factors to be considered by the OSC in making this determination include, but are not limited to, the size of the discharge, the character of the discharge, and the nature of the threat to public health or welfare of the United States. Upon obtaining such information, the OSC shall conduct an evaluation of the threat posed, based on the OSC's experience in assessing other discharges, and consultation with senior lead agency officials and readily available authorities on issues outside the OSC's technical expertise.